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City Plans Given Ontario Sanction

Besides validating Toronto's construction of 1,300 emergency houses in the past two years, the Ontario Legislature Private Bills Committee yesterday approved the city's bill giving wide powers to continue housing projects. The committee, however, extended these powers only until the end of 1948.

The bill permits the city to enter into slum clearance and low-rental housing, but stipulates that Toronto plans in this regard must have the approval of the Municipal Affairs Department.

Under the measure the city will be enabled to erect houses, purchase prefabricated houses, alter or repair present dwellings to help meet the housing shortage, and to lease or sell housing accommodation.

Municipal Affairs Minister George Dunbar told the committee he already had approved emergency housing measures so far taken by the city. Mayor Robert Saunders pointed out that it was not necessary to include this approval in the bill, but added that he did not object to the "approval amendment" being included which dealt with slum clearance and low-rental housing projects.

"Let It Go Ahead"

Howard Sale (P.C., York South) urged that no obstruction should be placed in the way of the bill if it was going to ease the present emergency. "If Toronto wants to go ahead, let it go ahead," said Joseph Meininger (Lib.-Lab., Waterloo North).

Mayor Saunders assured the committee there was "a terrible housing shortage in Toronto," and added: "We must fire ahead on it." He feared delays might cause loss of opportunities to acquire needed property. "I know we are riding rough-shod in some cases, but we have to do it," he said.

Mr. Dunbar assured him: "We are not going to put one stone in your way."

In approving the bill, the committee overrode objections made by Angus Dewar who said: "It is clear they have no definite plan. They only came up here to get authority to exercise the power they already have taken upon themselves." Mr. Dewar represented the Toronto Property Owners' Association. He objected in vain also to a clause permitting a \$12,300 grant by the city to the Toronto Convention and Tourist Association which he wanted reduced to \$5,000. The grant will be for a five-year period.

Several clauses were deleted from the bill before it was reported. They dealt with municipal elections—fixing of nomination day and appointment of election officers—and establishment of a reserve fund to provide "works or projects exclusive of parks." Mr. Dunbar said the former clause would be covered by other legislation.